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**BUSH CRITICIZED FOR REMARKS ON STATE OF AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY**  
Emerson Says Manufacturing Problems Lie in the Failure of Washington to Act

LANSING- Following controversial comments regarding the automotive industry, the leader of the Michigan Senate Democrats sent a letter today to President Bush making it clear exactly where he feels responsibility lies for the current crisis in manufacturing. Emerson writes that the problems that the American manufacturing industry is experiencing are the direct result of the failure of President Bush and Congress to deal with pressing economic issues.

"The problems that our nation is experiencing in manufacturing are largely due to the failure of Washington to act," writes Democratic Majority Leader Robert Emerson (D-Flint). "Unfair international trade agreements, combined with a broken healthcare and pension system, have combined to drive American manufacturers overseas."

Emerson's letter was prompted by recent comments by the President that the problems in the American automotive industry are due to the failure of the Big Three to develop "a product that is relevant." Bush's insensitive remarks come as Michigan struggles to diversify its economy to compensate for manufacturing jobs being lost overseas.

"Nowhere has the impact of Washington's neglect of the American manufacturing industry been harder felt than right here in Michigan," said Emerson. "As our state makes every effort to diversify our economy and prepare our workforce for the challenges of a global marketplace, we ask that the Administration and Congress work equally hard to resolve the policy failures that have led to this crisis."

Emerson also expressed disappointment that the President did not use last evening's State of the Union address to lay out a meaningful plan to address the problems plaguing manufacturing in America.

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Editor's note: A copy of the Emerson letter is available upon request.